

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

Suez and Colonialism

Seldom do so many international issues gather in one focus as at Suez. Behind the edged but weary legalisms of the Anglo-French case are the accumulated disappointments and resentments in important British and French circles. They have yielded incomparably much in Asia and in Africa during the decade since the war, a time of continuing economic stress for them; yet they face hot antagonisms and further blows. These countries represent a wide dependence upon Arab oil for daily existence, and they are furiously anxious over today's trends from Morocco to Syria and the Persian Gulf. Anger and suspicion grow with Russian interventions and threats involving the Mediterranean, the whole Near East, and further Afro-Asian commotion.

On the other side, back of the Egyptian assertion of sovereignty against external restraint, are many decades of protest-nationalism among a score of Asian and African peoples, whose self-consciousness and intense desire for modern development are formed essentially in reaction to British, French, and related power. The possibility of gaining much more from the wealth of oil that pours from Near East ground and passes—with other riches in transit—through the Canal, is before the eyes of people, mostly poor, who desire public improvements which Europe and America boast as the marks of civilization, and who feel themselves to have been exploited by the manipulators of this wealth.

Russians and their colleagues do not need to bring oil to these flames of resentful ambition mingled with natural determination to develop as effective states of the present era. But the Communists have provided arms to those restricted in getting them elsewhere, have supported diplomatic encouragement with strong propaganda, and have

implied that Britain and France could insist upon their rights with the ultimate sanction of force only at the risk of a war that would end no man knows where or how. The ferocious Arab antagonism to Israel as the product of power-driven British and American interference with the Near East intensifies the general hostility while these two nations are committed to maintain Israel.

The opposing stands are, to no small degree, mutually exclusive. The moral and political armor of each side in the Suez dispute shows faults; and there are substantial factors, visible to both parties and to some secondary participants in the active discussions, which work for compromise. Interruption of shipping through Suez, stoppage of oil production and sales—witness the Iran experience—acerbation of international friction and fear of war; these would be serious not merely to Britain and France, but to all of Europe and America, not merely to Egypt and her Arab associates, but to India, Indonesia, and other lands.

The United States and a number of other countries feel keenly the gravity of the Suez dispute and, in varying distribution of sympathies, understand the basic drives on both sides and desire a peaceful settlement with the maximum of justice attainable in the severe setting of our times. Any such attitude contains alloys of ignorance, indifference, self-interest, self-righteousness. Yet it offers more hope than would strong support of either side against the other, which would foster intransigence and would increase the risk of immediate war or intense resentment building up a prospective war. An intermediate position draws criticism and perhaps distrust from both sides—that the imperatively necessary solidarity of NATO is wrongly sacrificed and also that hateful colonialism is main-

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tained against the rightful desires of the Egyptians and half the world.

How can we of the United States continue in sound cooperation with Britain, France, and their neighbors, and at the same time honestly stand by our commitments to respect the self-direction of all nations and especially the orderly development of those peoples which have recently gained their independence or are in process toward it? What do our day-to-day choices and statements, our acts and our failures to act, mean in the long-run competition of free peoples with the Communist system, and notably before "the great uncommitted" who are now more astutely besought by the Russians and the Chinese? No impatient critic should assume that an easy path is known, which fools and knaves in Washington refuse to tread. To please all at home and abroad, with logical consistency and in entire safety, is absurdly impossible.

But we should like our national leaders to set forth their basic outlook more frequently and more clearly than they do, for their own good first, for the instruction and discussion of our own people, and for better understanding in the rest of the world of how today's acts and declarations are related to broader aims and longer vision. We should like to be more adequately assured that before a Secretary or prominent candidate or senator speaks and writes that there has been consultation taking into account all major interests that may be affected by his words and their possible consequences. We should like to be confident that great decisions are made greatly, before God and all humanity, not before a party rally, a chance press conference, or a televised quiz show.

M.S.B.

THE FUND UNDER FIRE

THE FUND for the Republic has been receiving much unfavorable publicity through the virulent and apparently interminable attacks of radio commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr., the reactionary press, and a widely disseminated statement by Representative Francis E. Walter, insinuating that the Fund may be a "foe in our . . . struggle against the Communist conspiracy . . . [and] serving an interest inimical to our basic American tradition." Significantly, Mr. Walter's Un-American Activities Committee has given representatives of the Fund no opportunity to reply.

Readers of this journal probably know that the Fund for the Republic is an independent educa-

tional foundation established by the Ford Foundation to work in the interest of freedom and civil rights. It would be folly to suggest that its directors have never made an unwise decision, but the main thrust of its activities should command overwhelming assent.

It may not be so well known that the Fund has made a considerable number of outright grants for the support of projects being carried forward by church and related agencies. Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics, Universalists, Episcopalians, Friends, Disciples of Christ, the National Council of Churches, and the national YMCA and YWCA are currently engaged in work financed by the Fund.

The broadside attacks on the Fund for the Republic appear even more ominous when it is realized that they are also, by implication, attacks on those organizations which the Fund has seen fit to support.

A.W.H.

GRAHAM AND SEGREGATION

BILLY GRAHAM'S article in a recent issue of *Life* on race relations is clear and moving in its demonstration of the conflict between Christian faith and racial discrimination and segregation. This is not the first time that he has affirmed this position but this article is certainly his fullest and most powerful statement of it to receive national attention. He is wise in taking space to demolish the Biblical rationalizations of segregation on their own ground, and wherever these old arguments show their head he can be quoted against them with considerable effect. But they are now only rationalizations, and Graham's declaration of the meaning of God's love for all men and of the requirements of neighbor love in the light of the actual burdens imposed upon minority races is the heart of his message. His great influence should do much to disturb complacent Christians and to release the truth of the gospel that has been hidden from the churches themselves in many places. There is no other Christian leader in America who can do as much as Billy Graham to open the eyes of believing Christians to the implications of their faith in this area.

From the point of view of his work as an evangelist perhaps the most important sentence in the article is his statement that "the church, if it aims to be the true church, dares not segregate the message of good racial relations from the message of

regeneration, for the human race is sinful—and man as sinner is prone to desert God and neighbor alike." The difficulty is that an idea of regeneration that has no such content has such a head start in most of the circles that are responsive to popular evangelism, that a task of re-education concerning the very substance of sin, repentance and regeneration is called for as an essential part of the program of evangelism.

One sentence suggests that allowance is not made for the difficulty of doing this re-education. Billy Graham says, "any man who has a genuine conversion experience will find his racial attitudes greatly changed." The depth of the problem can best be seen if we question the accuracy of that sentence. It is true that one test of the genuineness of a conversion is the effect that it has on personal, face-to-face relations with persons of other races. But it is not true that a genuine conversion necessarily leads to a re-examination of social structures of racial discrimination and segregation. To say that all conversions that have not done so have not been genuine in terms of personal piety would be to go too far. Unless criticism of one's social and cultural pattern is introduced into the very substance of repentance, and unless a sense of responsibility for justice in social structures is introduced into the very substance of regeneration, we cannot expect that Christians who are converted will come to a new attitude about racial segregation.

Dr. Graham is right in emphasizing the fact that racial prejudice is not a regional problem but that in one form or another it is found in all regions of this country and in other cultures. But the changing of unjust structures of segregation calls for something more and something less than the overcoming of prejudice. Both law and accepted social institutions could be on the side of racial justice before all feelings of prejudice are overcome in most people. And it is in relation to that possibility that one is most disturbed by the studied policy of "nullification" in some southern states where the churches are most influential and personal piety nourished by the Bible is most widespread. No one should ask the states where the problems are most acute to move rapidly, but the difficulty is that they are determined not to move at all.

These comments are not intended as criticisms of Billy Graham's truly prophetic statement about the racial problem. They are intended to call attention to the magnitude of the spiritual problem implicit in his interpretation of conversion. The role of the evangelist and his program of evangel-

ism in the light of this new interpretation should become radically different from what Billy Graham's vast public has been led to expect. In the meantime his own words on this subject now should carry very far and bring light and disturbance to the whole church.

J.C.B.

CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED

WE SEE by the papers that a campaign is underway to secure funds for a memorial to Edward J. Flynn, the late Bronx Democratic Party leader. That should startle nobody. But the report that this memorial may possibly take the form of an endowed professorship in government at Fordham University leaves one stranded midway between amusement and amazement.

During Mr. Flynn's more than thirty-year tenure, the Bronx came to be known as "a community of one and a half million people, surrounded on every side by Ed Flynn." Even his opposite number in the Republican Party lived on Flynn's patronage. His was, to be sure, a comparatively benevolent despotism, but democracies are not supposed to be ruled by despots.

Yet, the memorial proposal may embody sound realism. Government in a democracy does depend on strong party organizations and leadership. Party leaders can become despots (and not necessarily benevolent ones) only so long as ordinary citizens shun day-to-day participation in local partisan politics.

Why not have an "Edward J. Flynn Chair of Government" at Fordham? For a long, long time in the Bronx he *was* the government. And his unchallenged power was derived directly from the consent of the governed — a consent rendered through inertia, indifference, and (by some) through a misguided attempt to keep themselves unspotted from the world.

A.W.H.

In Our Next Issue,

which will arrive a few days later in order to give us an opportunity to comment on the results of the election, John S. Barr, in "An Appeal to the West," writes:

"It often seems that Western foreign policies are based on two strongly held assumptions: (1) that the Communist system in Russia and China is going to fail, and (2) that the uncommitted neutralist nations of Asia are unrealistic, and even immoral, in their foreign policies. Many non-Americans consider these assumptions quite wrong."

Why Ministers Break Down

ROY PEARSON

WESLEY SHRADER'S recent article in *Life* is an important contribution to an intelligent understanding of the incidence of emotional disturbance in Christian ministers. It holds up the problem to national attention, and it will almost certainly lead many local churches to reconsider the kind of performance which they have been expecting of their clergy.

However, the casual reader is likely to draw too simple a conclusion from his perusal of the article. He is likely to interpret the phenomena exclusively in terms of sin or blindness in the church. A man is strong until he becomes the minister of a church, the church makes impossible demands upon him, and finally he breaks down.

No one denies that such a tragedy often occurs, but this is not the whole story. Sometimes the weakness is in the man himself, and at the risk of seeming to be unfair to thousands of soundly committed, faithfully toiling, and incredibly overburdened ministers it may be helpful to point out three further factors in emotional failure among the clergy.

For one thing, it is obvious that the ministry has steadily attracted not only the strong but also the weak, not only the heroes but also the cowards, not only men seeking responsibility but also men looking for escape. A man's reasons for entering the ministry may be as different as an authentic call from God and a desire to elude the draft. They may be as commendable as an honest desire to be helpful to his fellows or as inconclusive as the remark of an elderly member of the church of his childhood that a young man with a voice like his ought to be a minister. When a man is pushed into the ministry by nothing more significant than parental pressure or vague idealism, it is small cause for wonder that he often finds himself bewildered and confused.

He may be unable to provide himself with a satisfactory diagnosis of his own dilemma and hence may know no more about himself than that he is personally unhappy and professionally ineffectual. Or he may suddenly come face to face with the truth about what has happened to him and thus may realize that he is in the wrong vocation. But in either case he faces a decision of intolerable proportions. He is trained for only one profession

—that of the parish minister. His theological education has been narrowly specific, and he is equipped to do nothing but the work which he has found to be the cause of his inner disturbance. He probably has a family dependent upon his unfailing support, and the likelihood is great that he has no accumulated resources sufficient to tide his house over any contemplated period of retooling. Moreover, his absorption in the ministry has almost certainly kept him from the serious consideration of any other vocation, and he would not know what course to take even if the way were open for him to choose whatever means of livelihood he wished. So day by day he goes on, trying to do what he knows he cannot do. Day by day his strength grows less and less, and finally some sudden and unexpected demand upon his emotional capital finds him with his account overdrawn. He collapses, and although the announced cause of his breakdown may be overwork imposed from without, the real source is better described as unbearable tension rising from within. Perhaps the bitter process was initiated by the well-intentioned people who steered him in the wrong direction when he made up his mind to be a minister. Perhaps it would be enough to say that he simply destroyed himself. But in the last analysis it was certainly not the excessive demands of his church which worked the evil upon him.

In the second place, some of the roots of ministerial collapse are to be found in the theological schools. The seminaries have not always been good custodians of their responsibility to pass careful judgment on the students whom they admit for theological training.

Not many years ago it could be said of many of these schools that they were too eager to get students to pay much attention to the kind of students whom they got. Sometimes the pressure came from the churches themselves. They were desperate for ministers, and where else could they turn but to the seminaries? Sometimes the pressure came from the trustees. They wanted to be proud of their school, and how could they be proud of an institution which had so small an enrollment? And sometimes the pressure came simply from professional rivalry. Another seminary had twice as many students and unless you wanted to be left behind in the race, were you not compelled to match it?

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Today, however, the situation has greatly changed. Most seminaries have many more applications than they can approve, and although it is still true that not all of the applications come from students in whom the faculties have unqualified confidence, the principal problem is efficiency in determining a man's potentiality for able service through the church. The criteria are somewhat varied in the different schools, but they usually include a transcript of the student's record at college, letters of recommendation from individuals closely acquainted with him, psychological tests of one kind or another, and sometimes personal interviews either with members of the school staff or with trusted alumni living near the candidate's place of residence. But the seminaries would be the first to admit that these procedures are far from infallible. Sometimes the failure comes simply from ordinary carelessness or avoidable error, but more often it comes from an honest inability to devise a system of testing which will neither exclude the initially unpromising student who has a latent capacity badly needed by the church nor admit the superficially brilliant man whose attractiveness is nothing but a thin veneer without enduring structure.

Whatever the explanation given to the fact, the seminaries are still admitting to ministerial training considerable numbers of men who ought to have been turned to other vocations. Some of these students are denied further registration at the close of their first year of study, but many others slip through to graduation. Since it takes a strong backbone in the churches to deny ordination to an individual with a seminary degree, these men become ministers whose vessels are cracked before the water of responsibility ever enters them, and when at last they are shattered, the cause is less the unwarranted pressure of the contents than the inadequate stability of the container.

And then, third, many ministers break down because of the quality of their own self-image. They do not collapse because the church has loaded them too heavily or because the church has confused them with conflicting duties. They collapse because they have never subjected themselves to a discipline capable of showing them what a minister actually is or ought to be.

The Shrader article rightly calls attention to the destructive results when a minister tries to be a specialist in a multitude of fields, when he attempts to be not only a good preacher or a good pastor but also a good administrator, organizer, teacher, and community leader. But not all of the culpability in this confusion can be assigned to the

church which the minister serves. Some of the fault is his own. He has not made up his mind about his own calling, or he has made up his mind in the wrong way, or having made it up correctly, he has not had the courage to stick to his conclusions about it.

In some ministers the weakness is no more than the inability to think clearly. In others it is the failure to act decisively. In still others it is a sense of being indispensable and a consequent incapacity for the delegation of responsibility or an ideal of perfection and a resultant blindness both to man's inescapable frailty and to God's unconquerable power. Too many ministers are pathologically afraid of disapproval, and—wholly unwittingly—the self-image which they have conceived for themselves is that of the well-mannered child who wins the plaudits of his elders because he keeps his clothes clean, brushes his teeth regularly, gets good marks at school, and never uses profanity. Because of his desperate need to be praised the minister falls into the pit of excessive self-dispersal. He tries to be both a good mystic and a good huckster, a good pastor and a good golfer, a good preacher and a good executive. But always the final fault is in himself. The trigger may be pulled by his church, but the gun and ammunition are his own. He has allowed himself to be the kind of man who cannot plot his own course.

Richard Niebuhr suggests as a new self-image for the minister that of the "pastoral director." One wonders whether this is not simply a slight refinement of the old terms "administrator" or "organizer," but if the fresh terminology does nothing else, at least it calls attention to the need for some powerfully integrating conception which draws all of the functions of the ministry into one inclusive purpose. If a man has provided himself with such a self-image, the multifarious demands of the church will not unnerve him. If he has not, no act of his church will save him from bewilderment and ineffectiveness, and when a man thus handicapped collapses in the ministry, the sources of his failure are not in his church but in himself.

All this is not to say that Shrader's thesis is unfounded. It is merely to point out that some of the men who collapse in the course of their parish duties were collapsible before they assumed them, and that if some of the causes of emotional disturbance in the clergy are to be found in the churches which the men were serving at the time of their breakdown, some of them must also be traced to the forces which made the men what they were at the time when they decided to go into the ministry.

Some Observations on the Frankfurt Kirchentag

WALTER MARSHALL HORTON

HANOVER 1949, Essen 1950, Berlin 1951, Hamburg 1953, Leipzig 1954, Frankfurt 1956—the Kirchentag is now a firmly rooted all-German movement, overarching the tragic political division which no German can forget for a moment, continuing between meetings to pursue its long-term goal of the revitalization of the church through the reactivation of the laity. Previous meetings have stirred the enthusiasm of foreign observers, notably the late Walter Van Kirk, whose interpretation of Leipzig, "The Bells of Hope Ring Behind the Iron Curtain," was read with great interest in America. At Frankfurt, a conscious effort was made to turn the meeting into an ecumenical meeting, by inviting overseas visitors to come in large numbers, by giving prominence on the program to an ecumenical session addressed by Visser't Hooft, D. T. Niles, and Bishop Dibelius, and by providing interpreters, ear-phones, and group meetings for those using foreign languages, especially English. What impression did Frankfurt '56 make on an overseas visitor?

First, an impression of *bigness and complexity, defying simple analysis and sweeping judgment*. The Frankfurt Fair Grounds were filled to overflowing with registered delegates and daily ticket-holders. Six "working groups" met separately for Bible study and discussion of special topics—ranging from "Church and Community" through "Family and Education" to the political and economic fields—and they so jammed all the great halls of the Fair Grounds that crowds were always sitting or standing outside, listening to loud-speakers. In addition to this swarming beehive at the Fair Grounds, there was a huge Youth Camp outside the city, services every day in many city churches, open-air preaching at some of the busiest intersections, recommended films in the theatres, "cultural" presentations (music, drama, literature, fine arts) in many locations, and in short more ramifications than any one visitor could follow. The opening and closing meetings at the Römerberg and the Rebstock airport swept in thousands who had converged on Frankfurt in summer vacation mood to participate in the great event—many of them youth troops on bicycles carrying banners—swelling the final total to well over 300,000.

It is a great and important thing in itself for a Christian movement to attain such magnitude that it thus catches the public eye and holds public attention as a newsworthy occurrence. An East German woman who sat near me at the closing meeting said that what impressed her most was that so many people existed who dared to acknowledge openly their Christian allegiance. Still, one is bound to ask about the *quality of personal decision* expressed in such an act of mass allegiance. A Frenchman to whom I described the gathering remarked sceptically that great mass demonstrations were nothing new in Germany; Hitler brought them to a high pitch of perfection. Reflecting on this remark, I feel bound to say that there was something more here than an obedient multitude shouting "Ja!" in response to a few spell-binders. There were able speeches by the leaders, but there were also frequent periods of open discussion from the floor, in which the laity's demand for a more vital and more public-minded church often came to expression. An original feature of *this* Kirchentag was the large opportunity for individual interviews with experienced pastoral counselors and "confessors." The word "confession" was actually used, and one of the liveliest debates was on the question whether auricular confession was a purely Catholic notion or whether there was *a place and a need for it among good Lutherans and Calvinists*. No, this was not a *passive* mass-meeting; the mass was huge, but very yeasty, shot through with individual reactions and personal decisions.

A second main impression was of *the obsessive importance of the issue of German reunification*. From the opening worship service to the very end, reference to the "divided Fatherland" kept cropping up, always with indications of deep grief over the division, deep joy over this occasionally permitted reunion, and deep hope that such religious meetings might eventually help to heal the political cleavage. Fifteen thousand delegates were officially allowed to come from East Germany, and thousands more came without registering, but without serious interference from either side. They were housed and fed and made heartily welcome by their brethren of the West. Only in the case of Otto Nuschke and other high officials of the East German government, who used the Kirchentag as an occasion for favor-

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Saint Hereticus

THE CRYING NEED FOR SOME FRESH CLICHES

A friendly correspondent (not all of my correspondents are friendly) has pointed out that two recent books contain the statement that sermons should not consist of snippets from the *Readers' Digest*. "Is this," he asks, "our answer to the crying need for some fresh clichés?"

The question indirectly raises a good point. Are we not, as a matter of fact, in need of some new clichés? If we have to have them, new ones are certainly better than old ones. And there are a lot that should be discarded for a few generations, like the one to the effect that our moral advances have not caught up with our technological advances, and the one about it being better to light a candle than to curse the darkness, and the distressing phrase (to be spoken in a sanctimonious tone) about "the realm of the spirit."

We have also had enough, perhaps, of the phrase, "Let the church be the church," though this suggests a formula out of which some new clichés could be manufactured. Certainly we could hammer away for a few years on such themes as "Let the layman be the layman," or "Let the Sunday school be the Sunday school," or even, in this anthropologically-conscious century of ours, "Let man be man." Should it be objected that these are obvious and uninspiring, the same objection could be brought against the obvious phrase about the church which has inspired them. But the churchmen got a lot of mileage out of letting the church be the church, and there is no reason why ingenious imaginations couldn't do the same thing with laymen, Sunday schools and man.

I admit that the device has its difficulties when extended to the realm of modern existentialist

theology. It will be hard for the Kierkegaardian scholars, for example, to say trippingly upon the tongue, "Let the teleological suspension of the ethical be the teleological suspension of the ethical." And if they should say, "Let the paradox be the paradox," they will be faced by the baffling problem that they will quite inconsistently be committing themselves to making an unparadoxical statement.

Secondly, new spellings could help us out of some of our current cliché difficulties. What word in our day and age is more threadbare, for example, than "ecumenical"? When everything is given the stamp of "ecumenical" to assure its Christian respectability, we are in danger of losing what very recently was a brand new word. But the British offer us a refreshing gambit here, for with characteristic scholarly punctiliousness, they consistently refer in print to "the *oecumenical* movement," and to "oecumenicity." Two advantages: closer to the Greek, farther from the cliché. This spelling could make casual American readers sit up and take notice for years. Let the ecumenical movement be the oecumenical movement.

A third possibility would be to take some of the old clichés and invert them. We could create a new vision of the prophetic task of the church in our day (a cliché itself if there ever was one) by beginning to describe the church as "a hammer which has worn out many anvils." And if we can be permitted only slight modifications in spelling, we can invert another old saw which tells us that where there is no vision the people perish, and talk about the importance of church-centered life for spiritual nurture, with the phrase, "Where there is no parish, the people wizen."

Finally there might still be merit in calling attention to some of the old clichés so constantly that people have to ask what they really mean. I have one in particular to suggest for this fall. Every politician in the country is going to keep telling us, in an eminently smug and self-satisfied way, about "this nation under God." By November 6, there will be no more threadbare clichés in American culture. But get a few preachers to start reminding the politicians (and voters) that the phrase means "this nation *under the judgment* of God," and not only will the smugness and the self-satisfaction begin to be called into question, but all sorts of exciting new dimensions might be introduced into our national life.

The Frankfurt Kirchentag (Continued from Page 146)

able propaganda and complained that they were not treated as well at Frankfurt as their opposite numbers were treated at Leipzig, were there any outbreaks of personal hostility between East and West. At an open discussion on "The Cost of Peace," one afternoon in the Great Hall, Nuschke sat in the front row near the rostrum, and was the object of sharp thrusts and embarrassing queries about free elections and the like from most of the three-minute speakers. His own attempt to justify the East German government's attitude toward the church was interrupted by heckling from the galleries. Finally, after yelling, "That is false!" at one of the later speakers, he stalked from the hall and tried to save face in a long press conference the next day. From this point on, there was evidently some tension between the Kirchentag leaders over the treatment of Nuschke and other Eastern political figures. They were made the objects of special courtesy, and Nuschke was somehow persuaded to attend the closing meeting after publicly announcing that he could not come, but Niemöller said in his closing speech that things had happened that ought never to have happened, and could not be forgotten, though they might be forgiven. This was a somewhat sour closing chord for a symphony on the theme, "Be Ye Reconciled," but it should be added that personal relations between West German Christian leaders had already been strained by a severe conflict over the rearmament issue, before the Frankfurt meeting. And it was possible for Bishop Dibelius to announce on the last day that the leaders had met and reconciled their personal tensions without, of course, giving up all differences of opinion.

This tense, dramatic situation made it difficult for an American observer to give less than first place to the issue of German reunification at Frank-

furt. It is true that Dr. Giessen, secretary of the Kirchentag, stated at a press conference on the second day that this issue was not so dominant at Frankfurt as at other recent Kirchentags. This statement was challenged by the correspondent of the Essen independent daily, *Die Welt*, (Aug. 13, p.3), who claimed that "the Kirchentag draws its vitality from two things we do not possess: a united nation and a living Church." One who has not attended previous Kirchentags cannot easily judge between these two views. Perhaps a fair view would be that on account of the Nuschke episode the East-West issue bulked larger at Frankfurt than the leaders wanted or intended. Their conscious philosophy, often repeated in various connections, was that Germans cannot be reconciled with one another, in their churches or homes or cities or in their divided nation, unless they are first reconciled with what lies above and beyond themselves: the judgment and forgiving grace of God, and the fellowship of the Church Universal. This is easier to preach than to practice, as events at Frankfurt showed, but perhaps Frankfurt made a good beginning toward the release of German Protestants from what could become a dangerous obsession with their own political misery—thus in the long run helping toward the peaceful resolution of an issue which might otherwise flame out into war.

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